

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-08 PRS-01 /068 W
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R 020945Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9104
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 3318

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS MMOL VM LA
SUBJECT: PATHET LAO-VIET DIFFICULTIES AND LAO RESISTANCE

REF: VIENTIANE 0130

1. LIKE EMBASSY VIENTIANE, WE ARE ALSO PICKING UP A FEW STORIES IN BANGKOK ABOUT DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN THE PAVN AND THE PATHET LAO IN SOUTHERN LAOS. WE LEARNED JAN 30 FROM AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST THAT AN AMERICAN (NAME UNKNOWN) REPORTEDLY ACCOMPANIED A LAO RESISTANCE GROUP INTO LAOS ON A RECONNAISSANCE MISSION AND RETURNED IN

THE PAST FEW DAYS. AMERICAN TOLD THE JOURNALIST THAT THE PROBLEMS PAVN ENCOUNTERS IN COOPERATING WITH THE PATHET LAO HAVE LED THE VIETNAMESE, IN SOME CASES, TO DISARM THE PATHET LAO. BECAUSE OF BAD RELATIONS WITH PAVN AND OTHER PROBLEMS, MORE PATHET LAO REPORTEDLY HAVE BEEN DEFECTING TO RESISTANCE FORCES, RESULTING IN AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE POSITION OF RESISTANCE FORCES. IN CONTRAST TO UNIFORMLY PESSIMISTIC REPORTS WE HEARD IN THE SUMMER AND AUTUMN OF 1977, EMPHASIZING POOR MORALE
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AMONG THE RESISTANCE FORCES, RESISTANCE GUERRILLAS NOW CLAIM THEY WILL "LIBERATE" TERRITORY IN THE SAVANNAKHET AREA WITHIN THREE YEARS.

2. THE AMERICAN CLAIMED TO HAVE HEARD THAT THE PAVN 308TH DIVISION HAS MOVED RECENTLY FROM NORTHERN TO SOUTHERN LAOS. HIS INFORMANTS WERE NOT SURE WHETHER THE MOVE WAS RELATED

TO THE CAMBODIAN-VIET BORDER FIGHTING OR TO RESISTANCE
ACTIVITIES IN THE SOUTH.

3. COMMENT: DESPITE SUCH SCATTERED REPORTS, WE HAVE FEW
INDICATIONS HERE OF WIDESPREAD DEFECTIONS BY PATHET LAO
TO THE RESISTANCE. MOREOVER, INSTANCES OF DEFECTIONS
COULD EASILY BE LOCAL MILITIA, THEREBY NOT SUGGESTING
SERIOUS TROUBLE FOR THE LPDR. FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, JOURNALIST
ALSO TOLD US OF A VIETNAMESE, WHO LIVED DURING THE WAR YEARS
IN HANOI, WHO HAS REPORTEDLY DEFECTED TO AND IS NOW FIGHTING
WITH THE LAO RESISTANCE IN SOUTHERN LAOS.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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